



Dr. Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary

March certainly came roaring in like a lion....and I'm really hoping that it ends like the proverbial lamb. I'd like to look up that darn groundhog up in Pennsylvania and wring its little neck for saddling us with more winter weather. This one's been brutal. Of course, March means that spring is on the way and the azaleas will soon be in bloom. So that's something to look forward to. March also means the legislative session is around the corner. Let's continue to hope that March goes out like a lamb.

Please see the next page for a story about six OJJ heroes who saved a life. And as usual, they were all so modest about what they did – going out of their way to assist a total stranger with a medical emergency. **Vernon Foy, John Preston, Rodney Alex, William Lee, and John Brunn** from SCY and **Fran Martin** from central office sprang to the aid of an elderly man who suffered a heart attack and by all reports they saved his life. Also see page 8 for a story about Alexandria **PPOs Trinity Adams and Heath Wallace** who stopped to assist when they observed a house fire. I am so impressed with the selflessness of OJJ staff, and I am so proud of each and every one of you. Not a day goes by without OJJ staff doing something to make us proud.

I am also proud to be a part of such a great organization. This issue of *The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is packed with your news and accomplishments.

“Doc” *Dr. Mary L. Livers*

OJJ HEROES SAVE A LIFE



Left to right: Vernon Foy, Swanson Deputy Director; John Preston, Swanson La Mod Coordinator; Fran Martin, Director of Staff Development (central office); Rodney Alex, Swanson Safety Captain; William Lee, Swanson principal; John Brunn, Swanson Maintenance Manager.

Staff from central office and Swanson attending the bi-annual QA Review held at the Vidalia Conference and Convention Center on the banks of the Mississippi River in Vidalia, had no idea that March 2 would be a day to remember.

Some staff had lunch at a well-known local restaurant, The Sandbar, and during their meal, an elderly man also having lunch there suffered a heart attack.

As the victim's son-in-law called for help, six OJJ employees sprang to the rescue. **Vernon Foy, Swanson Deputy Director; John Preston, Swanson La Mod Coordinator; Fran Martin, Director of Staff Development (central office); Rodney Alex, Swanson Safety Captain; William Lee, Swanson principal; John Brunn, Swanson Maintenance Manager,** all went to the man's aid at once, calming his son-in-law, clearing the area and performing CPR for over 10 minutes, until an ambulance arrived.

Director of Treatment Annette Arthur witnessed the event. "Vernon cleared the area and the rescuers performed CPR, doing chest compressions and mouth-to-mouth until the ambulance arrived," she said. "This man had no pulse nor was he breathing when staff intervened. Prior to the ambulance arriving, he was breathing again. I can say with confidence that the SCY staff definitely saved this man's life, and I am proud to work with such people."

Director of Staff Development Fran Martin was performing CPR when the ambulance arrived. "It seemed like forever, but we all kept working until we were no longer needed," she said. **SCY Deputy Director Vernon Foy** said that all facility staff take CPR courses annually and helping out came naturally.

Fran Martin, Annette Arthur and La MOD Coordinator Arlona Wells-Morgan stopped by the hospital on the way back to Baton Rouge to check on the 80 year-old man saved by OJJ staff members' quick action. "The man our staff gave CPR to survived," she said. "His family told us he was awake and talking but couldn't remember a thing. They plan to take him to a hospital in his hometown by ambulance."

"I can't express just how proud I am of our staff members who saved a life," said **Dr. Mary Livers**. "It's good to know that our consistent training in CPR and first aid pays off when needed, that trained staff take appropriate action when needed without hesitation. But more important is the willingness to help others in the community. OJJ staff are the greatest people to work with, and these six in particular deserve our highest commendation."

Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice, held March 3-5

Crowley City Judge M'Elise Trahan Receives Don Wydra Award



Left to right, OJJ Deputy Secretary Dr. Mary Livers, Judge M'Elise Trahan and PPS John Baker.

Congratulations to **Crowley City Court Judge M'Elise Trahan**, the recipient of the prestigious Don E. Wydra Memorial Award for Extraordinary Contribution to Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The award is presented annually at the Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice. **PPS John Baker** of Alexandria OJJ introduced Judge Trahan. The Don Wydra Award was created by the Governor's Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Advisory Board in memory of Wydra, a long-time public servant who served as chief of the DPS&C Juvenile Services section under three governors. He died of a heart attack in 1998 at age 56.

Silent Auction of Youth Artwork is the most successful ever

A highlight of the Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice is a Silent Auction of artwork by OJJ youth. **Director of Treatment Annette Arthur** chaired the auction with assistance from **Staff Development Director Fran Martin**, **General Counsel Martha Morgan**, **Communications Director Jerel Giarrusso** and **Jetson La MOD Coordinator**

Fouad Harb Over 84 works of art ranging from pencil sketches, paintings and decorated masks created by youth at JCY and BCCY were exhibited for silent bid. A total of \$1,002.00 was collected through bids by people who attended the conference and a donation from the Juvenile Justice Commission. The money will go directly into the accounts of the youth who created the artwork. Thanks to **Calcasieu Parish First Asst. District Attorney Ronnie Rossitto** and **Jetson art instructor Rendell Henry** for their assistance and support.



Members of the BCCY Praise Team, some of whom had their artwork exhibited at the Silent Auction, glance at some of the artwork.

BCCY Praise Team Entertains at the Governor's Conference



*The BCCY Praise Team entertains luncheon guests at the annual Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice. The singers are directed by **Capt. Seletar Gosa**, left, and accompanied by **Deputy Director Michael Gaines**, right, on trumpet, and **Mr. Lawrence Valerie**, keyboard. The Praise Team performs contemporary and old school Gospel and inspirational music.*

Soul Food

An inspirational column by OJJ staff



Swanson Chaplain Ricky

James

A WITHERED JOY

Do you have a withered joy? Have you noticed that many people have or express very little joy, if any joy at all? No doubt their hearts once overflowed with an abundance of joy. They may have retained their joy for several days, weeks, months, or even years, but somewhere down the road of life their joy became withered. It simply withered away. It dried up. And even though there may be an occasional smile, and even some laughter every now and then, but that deep down, abiding, refreshing, and jubilant joy has vanished away.

There is a passage of scripture called Joel. Joel talks about how tragedies, calamities, and circumstances caused the joy to wither. Joel tells about how the cankerworm, palmerworm, and the caterpillar had devoured their land. These worms, generally termed locusts, destroyed all of their crops, destroyed their grain fields, dried up their new wine, or grape vines, and dried up their oil vats. And they had a famine in their land. In that passage, it tells that the people during Joel's day had a very big problem. I want to tell you that even though they had a big problem, it was not too big for their Creator.

And I want to say to all of us, that yes we are facing big problems, we are going through difficult circumstances and adversities, but our problems is not too hard for Him. In Scripture there is a question, "Is there anything too hard for the Creator?" And the answer is "No," there is nothing too hard for Him.

He is a problem solver. He can make a way out of no way, if He wants to. He made a way for the Hebrews that were cast into the fiery furnace. They came out of the furnace without one stitch singed from their clothes, or hair from their head. He delivered Daniel from the lion's den. And He can handle whatever problem we are facing.

When our joy is withered our problems seem larger than they really are. Our night seem darker, and even our mountains seem taller than they really are. And when the things we face seem bigger than they really are, and they are out of our control, our joy seems to dissipate.

But I just want to tell you that, when your joy has withered away, to turn to the Creator and He will give you your joy back as David said: "Restore unto me the joy...and uphold me with your free spirit." **YOU CAN GET YOUR JOY BACK, IF YOU TURN TO THE CREATOR.**

Humbly submitted, Chaplain Ricky James

The Daily Motivator

Where is the joy?

Where is the joy in life? It is wherever and whenever you choose to accept it and to live it. You cannot get joy by taking it away from others, for it disappears as soon as you try to possess it. Nor can you experience joy by burdening it with all sorts of conditions and limitations.

The joy you seek is closer than you think. How many times have you looked right past it, straining to see it in the distance when it is already upon you? Joy is not found by arriving at its locale. Joy is experienced by allowing it into the moments you live. If you fear losing joy you will never really know it. Let go of the need to hold and contain it, and you'll experience the immensity of joy. Think not of where joy begins and where it can end, for all that will do is keep it away. The joy of life is yours to know, so simply let it be. -- Ralph Marston

Staff Spotlight

Spotlight on...Sharon Graham



Administrative Coordinator 4, Alexandria Regional Office

With 20 years in the Alexandria Regional Office, **Administrative Coordinator 4 Sharon Graham** has seen a lot of changes in OJJ over the years. She's also seen a lot of changes in her own job and in her personal life.

Sharon has 26 years total experience with the state, coming to OJJ after six years with OCS, performing support duties for adoptions and foster care cases. "That was interesting," Sharon said. "Then I came here. The way we do everything has changed over the years. When I first started, POs used Dictaphones and I typed their reports, case narratives and social histories on a typewriter. It was a while before we got computers. Though I don't have actual contact with the youth, I know the one thing that has never changed is that we are all here for one reason – to help juveniles change for the better."

"Sharon is very dependable," said **Regional Manager Johnny Qualls**. "She is usually one of the first people to arrive at work each day. Sharon is responsible for payroll, purchasing, human resources, inventory and anything else the office needs. Sharon gets along well with all staff. She is active in her church. She is a volunteer with Reach to Recovery with the American Cancer Society."

Sharon does indeed wear many hats. "I tease RM Johnny Qualls that he couldn't make it without me," she said. Sharon serves as clerical

supervisor and helps to support 20 employees in the Alexandria office. In addition to her regular duties, Sharon enjoys serving as the office's *Inside Scoop* reporter. She has served four district managers, all of whom, she said, have started out as probation officers, moved up to supervisor and finally to regional manager, before retiring.

"Even though I have seen a lot of changes, some things stay the same. All the staff members are team players. We work together and help one another. We are like a family. I've seen people come and go, and prepared a lot of new employee packets. Some people are not cut out for this kind of work and some love it. We have a lot of old-timers who are still with us, and who are very dedicated. That means a lot."

Sharon is a breast cancer survivor, and that experience brought on another set of changes. Diagnosed nine years ago, Sharon says she has a lot to be thankful for, including the support of her family and co-workers. She now volunteers with the American Cancer Society's Reach to Recovery program. As a volunteer, Sharon visits with patients face-to-face or by telephone, to let them know that they are not alone, and she is there to help with their needs. "Volunteers provide information, help personal needs, with wigs, things to make the patients feel better," Sharon said. "I am the person who goes between the patient and the Cancer Society, so the organization knows the services needed."

"As soon as I recovered, I started volunteering," Sharon went on. "You can't let something like that bring you down. My attitude was that you have to stay positive. I tell the patients I work with in Reaching to Recovery that you can't let your cancer bring you down. Most women worry about losing their hair. That was the least of my worries. Hair grows back. I had to fight; I had a seven-year-old to raise. My mother shaved her head to support me in what I was going through. We had fun with wigs, scarves and hats."

In 2002, Sharon was a guest speaker at the local American Cancer Society's Relay For Life fundraising event, that allows people to celebrate

the lives of people who have battled cancer, remember lost loved ones and fight back against the disease. Teams camp out at a local venue and take turns walking around a track. Someone is on the track at all times during the event, because cancer never sleeps.

Sharon also volunteers at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Pineville, serving as a Eucharistic Minister and helping with Wednesday night suppers for church members. "It gives you a break from your kitchen at home," she said.

The Avoyelles Parish native, whose maiden name was Rabalais, was born in Cottonport and raised in Mansura. "I was brought up in a family that spoke French, and I understand it but don't speak it," she says. "But I still have the accent. That's a part of me," she said, with her Cajun lilt. Sharon and her husband Bruce have been married for 23 years. Their 17 year old son, Nicholas, is a senior at Pineville High School. Bruce is a 30-year veteran of DOTD.

Sharon enjoys playing tennis with her son, and she is a member of Curves for Women, where she exercises four or five days a week after work. She also enjoys working in her yard, keeping up her flowerbeds and growing vegetables. "That's something we can do together," she said, "and there's nothing like a fresh cucumber. I love fresh vegetables right out of the garden."

"I was brought up in the country," she added. "My father farmed, and I am used to chickens and the country life. I'm not much of a city girl, I'm a country girl at heart. But I like living in the Alexandria/Pineville area. We have lived here for 22 years. I am close to my family and we visit often – it's only about 45 minutes – and I enjoy going home to the country."

"I like to stay busy and to help others," Sharon said. "I'm dedicated to my job, which is why I like to arrive early." Sharon's dedication is proof that one's position does not matter when it comes to meeting the mission.

Transitions

Comings and Goings.....welcome to new members of the OJJ family:

Alexandria

Brian Charles, Probation/Parole Officer 1
Cory Laborde, Probation/Parole Officer 1

Hammond

John Manuel, Probation/Parole Officer 1
Michael Marques, Probation/Parole Off. 1
Jamie Oertel - Probation/Parole Officer 1

Promotions

New Orleans

Daria Melder, Probation/Parole Officer 3

Our thanks and appreciation to the following employees for their dedicated service.

Central Office

Anne Carter, Administrative Asst 5
Yolanda Ellis, Economist 3
Tina Jolie, Administrative Asst 4
Carla Leyda, Program Manager 1
Philip Mason, Accountant 3
Elizabeth Meng, Program Manager 1
Kendra Rogers, Administrative Asst 4
Kelly Smith-Taylor, Accounting Tech
Stacey Williams-Miller, IT Liaison Officer 3
Diana Williamson, Policy Planner 4

Baton Rouge

Yolanda Brown, Probation/Parole Officer
Deshona Mobley, Probation/Parole Officer
Yolanda Latimer, Soc Ser Counselor 4-A
Shalanda Wells, Admin Coord 3

New Orleans

Judy Warren, Training/Dev Spec 3

Shreveport

Vernon Williams, Soc Ser Counselor 4-A

Opelousas

Stephanie Ledet

Jetson

Arthur Brown, Maintenance

Alton Coleman, Jr., Food Prod. Worker

Bridge City

Gaynell Adams, Instructor

Janet Benn, Administrative Coord. 3

Tracey Clayton, Administrative Coord. 2

Darren Coates, Ther. Recreation Spec. 1

Lillian Colar, Instructor

Lajauna Jordon, Ther. Recreation Spec 2

Kieki Metoyer, Ther. Recreation Spec 2

Monique Jones, Administrative Coord. 2

Thelma White, Administrative Coord. 3

Donald Stevenson, Instructor

Sherryl Stewart, Instructor

Joaquina Washington, Instructor

Swanson

Janice Curvin, Administrative Coord. 3

Cheryl Davis, Accountant 2

Glenda Joshua, Training/Dev. Pro. Mgr.

Karen Sanders, Food Production Worker

Roy Smith, Correction Captain

Retirements**Central Office**

Inell Cook, Procurement Specialist, 30 years of service

Amy Curry, Contracts/Grants Manager, 32 years of service

John Fruge', Purchasing/Procurement Director, 26 years of service

Vicki Picou, Attorney, 24 years of service

Jetson

Annie Leblanc, Social Service Counselor 2, 43 years of service

Lewis North, Youth Facility Deputy Director, 25 years of service

James Washington, Coach, 32 years of service

Swanson

Jerry Ward, Lt. Colonel, 31 years of service
Morris Stewart, Sgt. Mst., 12 yrs of service
Deloris Wilson, Instructor, 33 yrs. of service
Nancy Snow, Attorney 4, 11 years of service
Calvin Hawkins, Lt. Colonel, 22 years of service

CQIS POLICY UPDATES

A.2.3 Compensation for Other Employment, 2/26/10

A.2.11 Employee Assistance Program, 1/15/10

A.2.32 Certification of Compliance & Internal Controls for all Personnel Actions, 1/11/10

A.2.41 Verification of Credentials, 2/23/10

A.2.42 Leave Approval for Employees Prior to Retirement, 2/23/10

A.2.59 Salaries of Education Administrators and Instructors in Secure Facilities, 2/12/10

A.3.2 Travel, 1/28/10

C.4.1 Furlough Process and Escorted Absence, 2/3/10

C.8.1 Community-Based Services Policy and Procedure Manual (DYS Policies), 1/21/10

OJJ Provides Informational Materials to Parents of OJJ Youth

We now have a full complement of orientation materials for parents/guardians of children who are placed in OJJ custody or supervision. Two DVDs were produced, *Family Orientation to Secure Care* and *Family Orientation to Community Residential Care*. The booklets are entitled *A Chance for Change* for youth on probation and *Introduction to Secure Care, Handbook for Parents*.

Success!

As often as we receive stories about our youth overcoming adversity and the situations they find themselves in, we will print them in *The Inside Scoop...of OJJ*. Please keep the good news coming!

Monroe OJJ Shares Success Story

By PPO3 Gary L. Hunter, Monroe

Absolutely, we are proud.

On January 30, Jay D. W. graduated from the Louisiana Youth Challenge Program, Camp Minden, Class 2009-2010. While a cadet, Jay achieved his Louisiana High School Equivalency Diploma. Jay's diploma was accompanied by certificates of achievement in personal growth and best attitude. When Jay and his mother reported to the office, the two were all smiles with an eagerness to let his PO know. Jay's comments were "I did not realize that I could do it. I could have been doing this in school. I believe I can do more. I know I am not alone."

We appreciate the collaborative efforts of the Youth Challenge Program with our agency. Because of the parent, Honorable Fred Amman, Judge Monroe City Court, YCP and the Office of Juvenile Justice, Jay has a real opportunity to become a productive law abiding citizen. Congratulations Jay, we are all proud of you. Now, Jay knows he can

Success Story from Alexandria OJJ

By PPO3 Donna DeSoto, Alexandria

Jeanette R., age 15, was placed on probation with OJJ in February 2009 on a charge of second degree battery.

Her probation went very well. She complied with the conditions of her probation and made goals for herself.

One goal was to enter the Certified Nursing Assistant program available at her high school. Once accepted into the program she would be allowed to attend school for a half day and the nursing program for the remainder of the day. Jeanette really wanted to pursue this goal but two issues were roadblocks.

First was finances. In order to enroll in the program, she would have to purchase uniforms, shoes, a stethoscope and books. Her primary guardian was her grandmother and the funds were not available. The second obstacle was the charge on which she was adjudicated. If she was still on probation, she would not be allowed to intern at nursing homes.

I saw the desire this young lady had to pursue this goal. I inquired with RM Johnny Qualls to see if OJJ fund were available to assist her in purchasing the needed items. No funds were available. I knew if I could find the means to acquire these items for Jeanette that she could be released from probation early, as she had been on probation for nine months with no violations.

I spoke with her school principal, Mrs. Debbie Bains. She stated she had been using Jeanette as a role model at school because she was very focused, was doing excellent school work and was helping with tutoring. I explained the problem with finances and my efforts to help Jeanette obtain the needed items to enroll in the certified nursing assistant program.

Mrs. Bains did some checking to see if she could help. A few days later the principal called and said she had decided to make the purchases herself, as she truly believed in

Jeanette and knew she would do well. I approached the court and was able to obtain an early release so Jeanette could participate in the internship portion of the program.

This is truly a remarkable accomplishment for Jeanette and I strongly feel that it was an effort between herself, the public school system and

the local court, to allow her to achieve this goal.



On January 21, 2010, Jeanette's picture appeared in the Weekly News in Avoyelles Parish, with an article indicating that Jeanette had graduated from the nursing assistant

program at her high school.

As her probation officer, I am very proud of her accomplishment and I feel certain she will be successful in life.

Success from Lafayette OJJ

By PPO2 Kevin M. Broussard, Lafayette

Jalen L., who is presently a resident in the Swanson Center for Youth, under the supervision of Vermilion Parish **Officer Jason McCraney**, recently passed his GED. To top it off, Jalen also took his ACT, and scored a 21. Way to go, Jalen!

Tylan B., who is lucky enough to have St. Mary Parish **Officer Cassandra Brown** as a caseworker, is a sophomore at Franklin Senior High School. Tylan is enrolled in the Gifted and Talented program at the high school, recently took the ACT for the first time, and scored a 22. Tylan has also been chosen for admission to the prestigious Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts in Natchitoches, LA, for the 2010-2011 academic year. Officer Brown says she is extremely proud of Tylan, and we wish him the best of luck.

Ezekiel A., from Franklin, on my caseload (St. Mary Parish **Officer Kevin Broussard**) completed the program at the Acadiana

Marine Institute in Branch in four months. The average length of time it takes a youth to graduate from the program is six and seven months. Ezekiel put his nose to the grindstone, and excelled in the program. Staff at AMI said they were sorry to see him leave, but they were glad he's starting a new positive chapter in his life, and his probation officer said that he was a pleasure to have on his caseload. Keep up the great work, Ezekiel!

Alexandria Regional Office

Another OJJ Rescue

While **PPOs Trinity Adams** and **Heath Wallace** were en route to make a parental contact in Ferriday, they noticed black smoke discharging from inside a home. PPO Adams immediately called 911 to relay information to dispatch. PPO Wallace immediately ran to the nearest bystander to see if anyone was still in the home. Officers Adams and Wallace then secured the scene and checked all bystanders to see if any medical attention was needed.

Upon arrival of the ambulance and fire trucks, Officers Adams and Wallace assisted the Ferriday Fire Department by stringing out the hoses towards the burning home until volunteer firefighters arrived on the scene. Due to their quick and heroic efforts while conducting their job duties, full public safety was maintained and there were no major injuries occurring during this incident.

We are very proud of our two fellow co-workers in Alexandria OJJ.

PPO3 Rodney McNeal attended Louisiana Drug Court Conference provided by the 9th JDC, in New Orleans.

Baton Rouge Regional Office

Baton Rouge OJJ began the month of February with a "Who Dat Tailgate and Mardi Gras Celebration." We started the morning with a big office breakfast then each unit set up their very own tailgate, which included everything from barbecue to Swedish meatballs to red beans and rice to boiled crawfish.

Everyone visited from unit to unit to spread the "Who Dat" cheer. Later, we all met together for fried catfish, potato salad, dirty rice, king cake and more Saints cheer. All and all, we had a very good "Who Dat/Mardi Gras" celebration.



Sue Larisey, Wendy Sarner, Susan Miller, Myron Theriot, Stefanie Krygowski, Leslie Jones and Keondra Riley enjoy the tailgate lunch.

Congratulations



PPO Cobie Chauvin,
Employee of the Month.
(2 thumbs up, Chauvin!)

PPO Steven Dukes successfully completed 40 hours of PPCT training and joined our transport roster. (Hallelujah!)

Junior PPO Brandon Woods Jr. turned one year old.

Community Outreach

Kudos to **PPO Brandon Woods** and **PPO Myron Theriot** for their participation in the "One Million Mentors Tour" sponsored by the Michael Baisden Foundation. PPO Woods and PPO Theriot gathered a few of our youth together and transported them to the event, which took place at the Baton Rouge River Center. The MB Foundation is a non-profit organization formed to eliminate illiteracy and promote technology through education, support and advancement of our communities. The 2010 focus of the foundation is Mentoring Our Youth. Supporters and participants included Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Club, 100 Black Men of America, National Cares Mentoring Movement, the United Way, local faith-based organizations and other community mentoring organizations. The event featured speakers who inspired our youth, challenged our community leaders and supported our local volunteers in an effort to "Save Our Kids".

Special Thanks

To PPCT Trainers **PM Angela Arabie, PS Jacqueline Page, PPS Susan Miller** and **PPO Stefanie Krygowski** for 40 hour/16 hour PPCT Refresher courses. (Thanks Y'all!)



RM Sue Larisey and PPOs Brandon Woods, Myron Theriot and Steven Dukes, in PPCT class.

Bridge City Center for Youth

Congratulations

Annual Employee Awards

Administrative Employee - Thelma White
 Supervisory Employee - Leticia Green
 Education Employee - Gaynell Adams
 Treatment Employee - Tamara Cotton
 Youth Care Officer - Ivory Watts
 Support Employee - Katrina Nelson

Fourth Quarter Employee Awards

Administrative Employee - Ina Anderson
 Supervisory Employee - Mary Gatlin
 Treatment Employee - Lajuana Jordan
 Youth Care Officer - Demetrial Jones
 Support Employee - Katrina Nelson

Condolences

Charles McLean, Jr. recently lost his father, Charles McLean, Sr. Please keep Charles and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

BCCY On Tour

On Feb. 23, a tour was conducted for legislators, District Attorneys and LDAA staff, and a Times-Picayune reporter and photographer. **Dr. Mary Livers** was joined by **Mark Steward, MYSI Director**, who updated the visitors on the full implementation of LA MOD. The visitors visited two dorms to observe group processes and engage with staff and youth. They also enjoyed Chef Ron Sonnier's Culinary Arts students' legendary cookies and treats.

Present for the tour were **State Rep. Mert Smiley**; **State Rep. Walter Leger, III**; **District Attorney Charles Ballay, 25th JD**, **Belle Chasse**; **District Attorney Joseph Waitz, 32nd JD**, **Houma**; **Assistant District Attorney Ralph Brandt, New Orleans**; **Pete Adams, Executive Director of the LDAA**;

Kristi Garcia Spinosa, LDAA Juvenile Justice Project Coordinator and **Pele Robinson of MYSI**.



From left, Charles Ballay, Ralph Waitz, Walt Leger, and Kristi Spinosa at right, observe Culinary Arts student Joseph W. demonstrate fancy napkin folding during a tour of BCCY.

On February 24 BCCY staff and youth were pleased to host a tour for **Ms. Laurie Garduque, Director of the MacArthur Foundation**. Ms. Garduque was formally introduced to a totally therapeutic secure care youth facility. The tour included conversations with youth and staff, a thorough view of the older and newer dormitories, interaction in the classroom, and a sampling of warm, fresh oven-baked cookies and snacks in the Culinary Arts building. Ms. Garduque left BCCY staff and youth with very complimentary words and a smile.

Thanks to the hardworking staff and youth for their efforts to showcase the wonderful work being done at Bridge City.

Get Caught Reading Program Launched

BCCY staff and youth will be proud to **Get Caught Reading**. On March 3 we launched the Get Caught Reading program developed by **Dr. Calvin Mackie**, an internationally known speaker, author, inventor, former professor, entrepreneur and award-winning mentor. He conducted a speaking engagement where he unfolded the focus and theory of the program for the youth and staff. We are certain the program will positively impact the quality of life for our youth and their families.

BCCY Youth Give Back to the Community

On February 22 **Harmony Community** at Bridge City Center for Youth made another successful, educational, and empowering trip to the Southeast Louisiana War Veteran's Home, in Reserve. As a community we have inspired the veterans by giving back unconditionally time, effort, and help in any way we can, which will allow change in the minds of the young men to make a difference. The youth are empowered every day by the expectations of the agency as well as the facility, empowered to become better sons, fathers, and outstanding citizens of their perspective communities and to restore the beauty instead of victimizing.

Our light as a community has allowed the War Veterans' community time to see our good works. The War Veterans' Home is in the process of providing other ways the Harmony community can be instrumental to their facility by assisting them with tasks essential to their day to day operation and production. The home has reduced its staff due to budget constraints and has asked that we pick up the void.



Tyrone S. and Dejon M. visit a resident of the Southeast LA War Veterans Home in Reserve.

These tasks will go along with the Restorative Justice assignments already in place, such as mopping floors, serving food and washing dishes. This is a special acknowledgement to the BCCY family that as one team with one mission, vision and goal, we can change the mindset of our children. By changing their mindset we allow them the chance to give back to their community, one step at a time.

Central Office

Condolences

Accountant Manager Victoria Williams recently lost her father, Sampson Williams.

Accounting Technician Sonja Anderson's father-in-law recently passed away.

Please keep both employees and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

Congratulations



DAS Ellyn Peterson, DAS Philippe Magloire and Dr. Mary Livers present Debbie Linder, third from left, with a certificate for the Award of Excellence for the 2009 third quarter.



Employee of the Quarter, Human Resources Specialist Judith Fontenot, left, is congratulated by Human Resources Director Gwen Jones, center and Dr. Mary Livers, right.



Inell Cook, Procurement Specialist, Amy Curry, Contracts/Grants Manager and John Fruge', Procurement/Purchasing Director, beam while displaying their certificates of appreciation for their many years of service, as they retire from state service.

Baby Shower Held for Budget Manager Kim Jones



Budget Manager Kim Jones shows off some of her shower gifts.

Budget Manager Kimberly Brent-Jones is expecting a new asset in her portfolio – a baby son due in April. Central office staff feted Kim with a shower to present her with lots of things that new babies need. The shower was a joint effort by Deputy Undersecretary Paula Merrick-Roddy, Administrative Assistant Marvel Adams, Dr. Livers' Assistant Nita Franklin-Shanklin, Administrative Assistant Katherine Abrams, Food Service Director Alethea Bornes, Budget Manager Adina Kyles and Contract/Grants Supervisor Monica Williams.

At long last...congratulations on assisting with community outreach program

Human Resources Director Gwen Jones, in her previous position as State Head Start Collaboration Director at DSS, was a co-founder of the **Mahalia Jackson Early Learning Center** set to open in New Orleans in March. The Center is a part of the Neighborhood Place program in which several state agencies collaborate with local programs to bring a one-stop shop for services into neighborhoods.

Gwen says the location was chosen as part of effort to rebuild New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. "We were trying to restore an abandoned neighborhood to normalcy and create a place where people would feel pride of ownership," Gwen said. She left DSS to join OJJ before the work was finalized.

After many meetings between state and federal agencies and children's advocacy groups, and several years of effort, the Center is about to become a reality. Gwen's work at DSS carries over to OJJ, as OJJ will have a role in the new Mahalia Jackson Early Learning Center (stay tuned for details).

Celebration for Saints in the Superbowl



Nita Franklin-Shanklin, Dr. Livers' assistant, left and Katherine Abrams, Administrative Assistant, display team spirit and fleur de lis king cakes as we

celebrated the long-awaited Saints appearance in the Superbowl.

Central Office Gets into the Beat for the American Heart Assn. Heart Walk

By Gwen Brinkley, Adm. Coordinator 4

DRUM ROLL PLEASE: We have raised \$450.00 so far for the American Heart Association Heart Walk. Hearts for the wall -\$150.00; Baskets (2) - \$150; raffle for a meal at Zea's Restaurant-\$80; Wear Red Day lunch - \$70.

BCCY Youth presented a number of designs for the T-shirt design contest. Winner is **Tevin A. Shawn M. and William J.** tied for first place. **Michael C.** was awarded 2nd place and **Alec J.** was the 3rd place winner. Please join me in giving a BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE to all of these young men from BCCY. The winner received a \$20 gift certificate to Pizza Hut, a certificate of recognition for a job well done, and will receive a t-shirt featuring his design. The t-shirt will also be worn by OJJ staff who participate in the American Heart Association Heart Walk on March 27.



The front, above, and back, below, of the winning Heart Walk t-shirt.



Now THAT'S an in-basket. Looks like DAS Philippe Magloire has a little fun reading ahead of him.

Hammond Regional Office

Welcome

Hammond OJJ welcomed three new Probation Officers. **Michael Marques, Jamie Oertel** and **Denise Wall** started working with us in February.

Farewell

Hammond OJJ said goodbye to WAE – **Clerical Assistant Whitley Williams**. Whitley was with the Hammond OJJ office for just over a year. She will be missed.

Superstar!!!

The Hammond OJJ Superstar for February was **PPO2 Kristin Rainey**. Kristin was nominated by **PPO2 Tiffany James** for transporting a youth for her at the last minute.

As reported by SSCIV Lori Wagner:

Social Services Counselor IV Lori Wagner reported that she assisted some of the employees affected by the layoff on February 18th and 19th. They gathered at the Louisiana Workforce Commission in Metairie and were able to get answers to questions they had regarding benefits, insurance, time, etc., through a phone conference with HR from central office. She also helped them process feelings, both good and bad, through a group format. Lori also reports that the OJJ classes through Louisiana Technical College are continuing this semester. Lori is teaching the Technical Writing class and has received positive feedback from the awesome group of students that are enrolled.

Jetson Center for Youth

JCY has One of the First African American LSU Students

Who would have known that we have a historian among us? On February 20 our very own **Social Services Counselor Joe Lee Lott** was honored by LSU as being a Tiger Torch Bearer, meaning he was the first African American to receive an athletic scholarship for wrestling, and he was the first African American athlete to receive a Masters Degree from LSU. JCY is very proud of Mr. Lott and all of his accomplishments.



Joe Lott with LSU Chancellor Michael Martin.



A handful of the Tiger Torch Bearers.

LSU saluted and celebrated pioneers and trailblazers in University sports, band, and spirit teams. These former athletes, band members, golden girls, and cheerleaders were be recognized during Black History Month for being ethnic minority firsts, breaking the color barrier in Tiger Athletics.

Please welcome the newest members of the Jetson family and wish them a long and successful career with JCY.

Marcia Booker, Social Service Counselor 2
Tonga Bryant, Social Service Counselor 3
Matthew Heroman, Plumber Pipe Fitter
Eddie Holladay, Corrections Cadet
Cherita Irvin, Professional Counselor 1
Lashonda Lang, Social Service Counselor 2
William Lapo, Corrections Cadet
Scarlette Pryer, Social Service counselor 4A
Burrell Robinson, Corrections Sergeant
Troyce Smith, Corrections Cadet

Please wish these employees the best in their retirement. They will be greatly missed.

Annie Leblanc, Social Service Counselor 2, 43 years of service
Lewis North, Juvenile Facility Deputy Director, 25 years of service
James Washington, Coach, 32 years of service

Scenic High School Partners with LA Technical College

Scenic Alternative High School has entered into a partnership with the Louisiana Technical College, Baton Rouge campus to allow eligible students to attend the college to earn an associate degree in Graphic Design.

The first class began in January with five students attending. Three students have GEDs and two are dually enrolled. Congratulations to **Brodrick E.** and **Renis W.**, for scoring extremely high on the Louisiana Technical College Compass Test.

The youth must meet the following criteria in order to be considered for this opportunity: Good behavior in Scenic Alternative High School and in the dorm with few minor violations, problem-free escorted visits, and recommendation by teachers of Scenic Alternative High School.

Future plans for the Fall 2010 are to have two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. It is envisioned that this partnership will continue to provide a valuable service to our youth and our agency.

These programs form good relationships with our community educational institutions. These opportunities further the education of OJJ's youth. We encourage our students to set positive goals and make educational and social changes in order for them to become successful citizens.

Celebrating Moments in Black History

Hats off to the youth at Scenic Alternative High School for a program well performed during Black History Month.

"Celebrating Moments in Black History" was the theme for the program. The agenda focused on poems, songs, and contributions of present and past African Americans, with **Michael C.** serving as Master of Ceremony. Posting of Colors was presented by the American Legion.

Keynote speakers were **Dr. Rani Whitfield, MD, (Dr. Hip Hop)**, and **David Augustine**, a local middle school teacher, who captivated the audience with a message of encouragement delivered via hip hop and rap. This method of production enabled the audience to participate. Afterward, a presentation was done by **Albert S.**

Director Daron Brown and **Principal Ronnie B. Knox** also offered words of encouragement and challenged our youth to continue to learn about contributions African Americans have made to our nation. Special guests were **Kim Mims, OJJ Director of Education** and **Ella Fairchild, Education Coordinator**.

After the celebration, a reception was held in which the cafeteria staff provided a bountiful array of refreshments. Special thanks to the educational staff and youth who worked so very hard to make this celebration a success.

Youth Enjoy Million Mentors Event

By JCY Director Daron Brown

On February 25 staff members **Belinda Thomas, James Spears, Kelly Johnson** and **Melvin Carter** escorted youths **C. Brown** and **B. Bowman** to the One Million Mentors Campaign sponsored by Michael Baisden and his co-host George Wilburn, at the Baton Rouge River Center. The campaign is designed to raise awareness of mentoring programs in Baton Rouge and to solicit adults to become mentors for youth in the Baton Rouge area. Baton Rouge was chosen as of the major cities to be visited by Mr. Baisden and his staff.

The youth were very surprised to learn about the different mentoring programs offered by people in the community. The panel of spokesmen consisted of **"Silky Slim," Senator Sharon Weston-Broome** and **Dr. Rani Whitfield (Dr. Hip Hop)**, who spoke to the JCY youth for our Black History Assembly earlier in the day.

The youth enjoyed themselves so that they could not sleep from the excitement. Also, one of them said the next day that he mentors two of the younger youth at the facility. He indicated that he talks to them and even gives them treats as incentives if they do not fight or get into trouble. To hear these words coming from this youth, uplifted my spirit and reminded me of the hard work that our staff at JCY do everyday. Our youth are listening, encouraging one another, changing their lives and the lives of other youth. This is MENTORING!



JCY youth with Dr. Hip Hop at the One Million Mentors program.

First Graduating Class of 2010

Good things do happen to those who patiently wait. February 8th was a good day for Jetson Center for Youth when 10 Youth Care Workers graduated from Jetson's first La MOD pre-service training for the year. The graduates are **Marcia Booker, Tonga Bryant, Ramona Garror, Eddie Holladay, Cherita Irvin, LaShonda Lang, William Lapo, Scarlette Pryer, Burrell Robinson** and **Troyce Smith**. This group brings to Jetson a wealth of knowledge and experience coupled with an eagerness to make a positive impact on the youth of this facility.

Each day in training was viewed as new adventure, and they had their days of adventure! There was a lot of teaching, a lot of learning, a lot of consoling, and a lot of sharing. Through all the adventures and the processing of these adventures it was discovered that they were each other's keeper, they were their brother's keeper.

Fran Martin, Director of Staff Development and **Linda Trotter, JCY Staff Development Coordinator**, spoke words of encouragement to the group. **Belinda Thomas, JCY Program Coordinator** administered the Juvenile Justice Employee's Oath. **Director Daron Brown** presented certificates and the long anticipated work assignments to each graduate. Graduates with certificates and work assignments in hand were ready to embark on the next leg of their adventure at JCY - to share their knowledge, experience and eagerness with the youth.



JCY's new La MOD graduates / staff members.

Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office

Congratulations

Iberia Parish **Officer Cassandra Gardiner** and St. Martin Parish **Officer George Hebert** were chosen as the **Employees of the Month** for February. Both officers selflessly volunteered their time and energy to assist **Supervisor Robert Guirard** with the transport schedule, while not neglecting their respective caseloads. Other officers volunteered and gave their time to assist PPS Guirard, but none to the extent of Officers Gardiner and Hebert. They are a shining example of what it means to meet the mission.

Community Service

Iberia Parish **Officer Cassandra Gardiner** recently became a Certified Operation Lifesaver Volunteer Presenter. Operation Lifesaver is a nonprofit public education program designed to promote railroad crossing safety, and is sponsored by the Louisiana Highway Commission, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, Louisiana State Police, and Louisiana railroads. Its Volunteer Presenters provide free training to schools, civic groups, drivers, emergency responders, and other interested parties.

Parent Listening Meeting Held

In February Lafayette OJJ held a Parent Listening Meeting at the Gethsemane Church of God in Christ Fellowship Hall in Lafayette. **Assistant Secretary Girard Melancon** fielded questions and feedback from concerned parents of youth under supervision and in custody. Representatives from Friends & Families of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FFLIC) also attended. **Lafayette RM Sharon Guillory** wishes to thank **Officers Justin Beasley, Cassandra Brown, Courtney Holderman, Bobby Jesset, Nick Landry, Jason McCraney, Sam Moore, Jody Osmer,**

and **Scott Peyton**, Supervisors **Pete Bonhomme**, **Top Guillory** and **Steve Neef**, Social Worker **Maria Menard**, and Program Specialists **Lane Plauche** and **Patty Thomas** for attending. She would like to especially thank **Transport Officer Ray Laverne** and **Officer Scott Peyton** for providing transportation for parents who wished to attend, but had no means to, and **Supervisor Steve Neef** for spearheading the event and writing letters inviting parents to the meeting.

Lake Charles Regional Office

Congratulations

PPO3 Karli Pullard celebrated 10 years of OJJ employment on February 21.

PPS Melissa Cross celebrated 10 years of OJJ employment on March 6.

Open House Planned for our New Digs

After two major hurricanes destroyed the Lake Charles office(s) in a matter of three years, we are extremely grateful for our new building.

Lake Charles OJJ is planning an Open House celebration April 1 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM for judges, District Attorneys, local service providers, and fellow OJJ staff, to come and view our beautiful new building. Official invitations are being printed. We want our community and our fellow OJJ staff to know who we are, where we are and what we do!



Scenes of our new building.

THANK YOU to Prison Enterprises for a job well done on the furniture in the Lake Charles office.

We gained full, unrestricted access to our new office building on February 1. The month of January was challenging for productivity with limited server access and limited telephone access, but the Lake Charles staff continued to fulfill all monthly requirements with no excuses made. Our staff's dedication to doing their job is outstanding!

Through the moving process, some of our employees did some extremely heavy lifting. Thank you to all of you for tireless work. And, as previously noted by **RM Ann Vick**, a special thanks to **PPO Garrick Chambers** who never stopped working and was consistently recognized as the hardest working employee.

Thanks to our Officers

PPO Garrick Chambers and **PPO Ronald Gilchrist** are applauded for being creative by seeking ice hockey game opportunities in the Lafayette area to reward some highly performing probationers.

On February 8 **PPO2 Alexis Heflin** and **PPS Melissa Cross** donated morning and early afternoon hours to recruit prospective employees and/or interns at the McNeese State University Spring Career Fair.

On February 11-12, **PPO Jeff Haley** attended Office of Risk Management Training in Shreveport to assume the duties of regional safety officer. Shortly after, **PPS Ken Vidrine** and **PPO Jeff Haley** completed the ORM Self Audit and submitted it timely.

On February 19 **PPO Jeff Haley** presented information at the Cameron Parish Planning Board in order to recruit more community service opportunities and restorative justice opportunities for his Cameron Parish probationers. Jeff was successful and now

has several local providers assisting him with recruiting new community service sites. Calcasieu Parish's Substance Abuse coalition hosted an alcohol-free zone for families to enjoy the Mardi Gras parade on February 16. **Probation Officers** volunteered their time to monitor this zone for appropriate behavior of the patrons. This is the second year that Calcasieu Parish hosted an alcohol-free zone, and it was a huge success both years.

PPO Karli Pullard and **PPO Alexis Heflin** attended the Governor's Conference on Juvenile Justice in New Orleans.

When the Saints Went Marching In

In February Lake Charles OJJ staff dressed in New Orleans Saints attire and showed support for the anticipated Superbowl Game on February 7. Oh, we believe!

Money was collected for the privilege of wearing jeans and Saints team attire. Proceeds will be utilized to purchase our office's refrigerator.



Pictured top and bottom, (left to right, back row to front row): RM Ann Vick, Delisa Clark, Melissa Cross, Erline Pierce, Monet Newman, Karli Pullard, Rebecca Harmon and Alexis Heflin.



Speaking of Mardi Gras....



On February 16, 2010, RM Ann Vick was in New Orleans to enjoy the Mardi Gras parades. The festive photo was submitted by her dear friend, RM Angela Koenig. Throw me somethin', Mister!!!!

In February all Lake Charles OJJ staff members participated in a PPCT refresher class for officer safety training, led by **PPCT Instructor Fred Fontenot**.

On February 27, 2010, many OJJ staff members participated in a local charity function to raise money for Big Brothers/Big Sisters. A minimum of \$35 was required to bowl. OJJ participants included **Garrick Chambers, Melissa Cross, Karli Pullard, Monet Newman, Rebecca Harmon, Erline Pierce, Ann Vick, Alexis Heflin, Fred Fontenot, Hollie Comeaux, Angie Stevens, and Ken Vidrine.**



The bowling team raised funds for Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Monroe Regional Office

PPO3 Gary Hunter organized an effort at Monroe OJJ to raise donations for the disaster in Haiti. We raised \$170.00 and Gary presented the donation to the American Red Cross.

PPS Karl Wallace and **PPO3 Erica Hollingsworth** attended the Office of Risk Management Conference in Bossier City.

PPS Orlando Davis completed all required CPTP training this month.

Monroe OJJ PPOs, Supervisors and RM completed Chemical Weapons Training at Ware Group Home.

Monroe OJJ participated in SAVRY Training. **RM Patty Newman**, **PPS Linda Williams**, and **Program Specialist Walteree Barnes** attend a SAVRY meeting at OJJ Central Office.

We all enjoyed our snow day on Feb. 12. Many of us spent the day building snowmen and playing with our children.

All of us at Monroe OJJ would like to congratulate **PPO3 Hannah Dozier** and her husband Ron on the pending birth of their first child.

And in closing, 'HOW BOUT THEM **SUPERBOWL SAINTS**'.....it felt like Christmas in February.



It's been a rough winter.

Two more feet of snow in New York.

Natchitoches Regional Office

Congratulations

PPS Kristen McComic was named **Employee of the Month** by her peers.

PPS Simon Sarpy attended the National Drug Court Conference February 10-12 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Community Program Involvement

The following staff were pictured in the Natchitoches Times for their involvement with Families in Need of Care program.

Pictured below are **Nelda Graham, SSC4**, **PPOs Brenda Sarpy** and **Sederick Smith**.



The Families in Need of Services (FINS) advisory board was honored at the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office/Community Services Division. The meeting and luncheon was to thank volunteers for time and commitment in making a difference in the lives of youth. The advisory board consists of individuals from mental health, law enforcement, office of community services, office of juvenile justice, Natchitoches Parish School Board, the sheriff's office, community enrichment, Metropolitan Circles and Natchitoches Parish Juvenile Center. From left are Nelda Graham and Brenda Sarpy, officers in the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office Community Services division, attended the FINS luncheon.

Families in Need of Services



The Families in Need of Services (FINS) advisory board was honored at the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office/Community Services Division. The meeting and luncheon was to thank volunteers for time and commitment in making a difference in the lives of youth. The advisory board consists of individuals from mental health, law enforcement, office of community services, office of juvenile justice, Natchitoches Parish School Board, the sheriff's office, community enrichment, Metropolitan Circles and Natchitoches Parish Juvenile Center. From left are Nelda Graham and Brenda Sarpy, officers in the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office Community Services division, attended the FINS luncheon.



Merry Byers, left, and Sederick Smith, officers in the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office Community Services division, attended the FINS luncheon.

New Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office

Condolences

Program Specialist Yezette White recently lost her grandfather, Mr. Louis Benjamin. We ask you to keep Yezette and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

Congratulations

Administrative Assistant Bridgette Dillon and her husband **Darryl** celebrated their 23rd wedding anniversary on February 28th. It was obvious that Bridgette was bursting in anticipation as she exited the office on the 25th. The natural glow she possessed eliminated the need for any electrical lighting in the building. Congratulations to Bridgette and her hubby. We wish them many more years of marital bliss.



Marital bliss.

PPO 2 Evalina Lestrick's nephew **Kaven Walker** has landed the lead role in a play entitled Pete's Dragon at the Ann Chance Theater, Arden Cahill Academy. Kaven will also serve as a chaperone and host for two young members of The Watoto Children's Choir from Uganda. Kaven also appeared on an episode of the A&E series "The Law Man" starring Steven Segal, where he had the opportunity to show off his karate moves.

Thanks to our PPOs

PO Stanley Schofield was busy, as usual, utilizing the spoken word to motivate, cultivate and celebrate the accomplishments of others. Mr. Schofield was the guest speaker for "Black History" month at Eisenhower Academy of Global Studies on February 12, and the Excel Academy on February 24. Mr. Schofield also attended a speaking engagement at Riverdale High School on February 25 where he held a discussion on "Drug Free Schools." Stanley was the guest speaker at the West St. John Civic Association Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. We know without a doubt that someone was enlightened, empowered and enhanced through Mr. Schofield's presentations.

PPO3 Milton Crosby had a very positive influence on a youth formerly in his caseload. The young female was headed down the wrong track and Milton's encouraging words helped to boost her self esteem. The youth reported to her current Probation Officer "Mr. Crosby is the best Probation Officer, he helped me through the most difficult times of my life, he put me on the right track." She is currently progressing well.

PO Daria Melder and **Program Specialist Paulette Carter** had the privileged opportunity of bringing additional household items to a family in need in Ms. Melder's caseload. This family has experienced some very trying times. However, thanks to the continued generosity of the folk in Region One, the burdens of this family are being lifted.

National Mentoring Month Celebrated

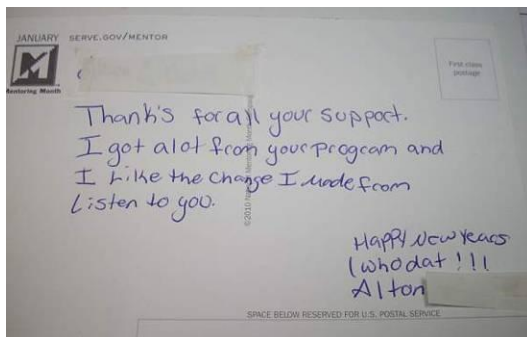
Orleans OJJ celebrated National Mentoring Month by encouraging the youth to show their appreciation for those who have mentored them. The youth showed appreciation by sending their mentors thank you postcards expressing how their friendship

helped them to become the persons they are today.

Café Reconcile, a community-based program that assists with GED and culinary skills for our youth, hosted a dinner with a panel of youth. The young people had the opportunity to voice their opinions and thank all who play a part in their advancement as productive citizens of society.



PPO2 Evalina Lestrack, PPO1 Kimberly Dickerson, Sr. Mary Lou Specha, PBVM Executive Director of Café Reconcile, Roxann Tuircuit, Social Worker. Not pictured but present, PPS Ralph Jones.



Thank you postcard written by an OJJ youth

Audubon Institute Hosts Youth

Social Worker Roxann Tuircuit continues to uproot trees and scale mountains in search of worthy experiences to which to expose the youth of Region One. This month Ms. Tuircuit and **PPO Kimberly Dickerson** took

three youth to the Aquarium of the Americas, compliments of the Audubon Institute.

The youth were amazed by what they saw and overjoyed by the experience. We would like to thank the Audubon Institute for giving back to the community.



Youth in amazement at the Aquarium.

Ms. Tuircuit also participated in a Black History celebration orchestrated by the staff at St. James Youth Center. Ms. Tuircuit shared, "The staff, youth and guests indulged themselves in a heart-filled program of our past, present and future."

How Bout Dem Saints?

Region 1 had a tailgating luncheon in anticipation of the New Orleans Saints' victory in the Super Bowl. We didn't get "Crunk" but we did get stuffed, which caused some expansion in our "Who Dat" gear.



The Who Dats

Youth Empowerment Project Holds Open House

YEP's Open House was held in February and they were delighted that so many folks stopped by, despite the fact that it was a cold and rainy evening. Among the many visitors was **Program Specialist Yezette White**.

Youth involved in YEP's programs and the Literacy AmeriCorps members served as tour guides for the evening and it was terrific to have our young people interacting with guests and showing off the new space. They were proud of the new space. Improvements to the back rooms were dedicated to our youth. Now, we have a game room in the back and the group room was spruced up to make it cozier and brighter. In addition, YEP has taken over additional space and renovated their administrative and case management offices. YEP would love to show you their updated space, so if you are ever in the New Orleans area they encourage you to stop by their administrative and case management offices at 1604 Oretha Castle Boulevard.



At the YEP Open house, youth work on the computers.



YEP Executive Director Melissa Sawyer and Glenis Scott, Director of Case Management.

Shreveport Regional Office

Staff served as judges for the Social Studies Fair at Caddo Middle Magnet School. Participating were **Guy May, Jan Crain, Kim Carlisle, Rick Ladner, Kristen McKee, Terri Harber, Natalie Pope, Charles Herrmann, Shirley Jenkins, Todd Carlisle** and **Jennifer Hill**.

After-hour curfew checks were conducted by staff under the supervision of **PPS Guy May** and **PPS Steve Martino** in February. PPOs participating were **PPO Todd Carlisle, PPO Brandy Stratton, Fabrecia Roberson** and **PPO Nitasha Gibson**.

Our office participated in SAVRY training in January. Our officers welcome the new process and showed a positive attitude. Thank you to **Kim Carlisle and Kristi Martin**, our trainers, for all the preparation required to train the staff. We would like to recognize both for attending the SAVRY training and investing a great deal of time in completing all homework assignments.

Probation Officers Nitasha Gibson, John Whitlock, Tish Juneau, Jennifer Hill, Daniel Barnard, Bobby Newman, Charles Herrmann, Dwain Wilemon, Sandy Ersoff, Natalie Pope and **Terri Harber** attended the CPTP course for Professionalism and Productivity at LSUHSC in Shreveport in January.

PPO Bobby Newman and **PPO Jennifer Hill** were recently reallocated to PPO3 positions. Congratulations on the promotions and keep up the good work.



Employees were excited to be given a "snow day" in February. Staff enjoyed staying at home with their families and some even built snowmen.

Swanson Center for Youth

Congratulations

SCY's Employees of the 4th quarter were YCW Harry Ferguson, MSgt. Donald Armstrong, Lt. Reginald Hammock, SSC2 Jerome Dixon and Admin. Coordinator Shakita Hayes. YCW Victor Gardner was Employee of the Quarter for Holly D dormitory.

Good News from Southside High School

Six more of our students have passed the GED test. We congratulate our students on this achievement: **Jeremy A, Charles B., Juwan J. Kevin L., George M. and Jeremy W.**

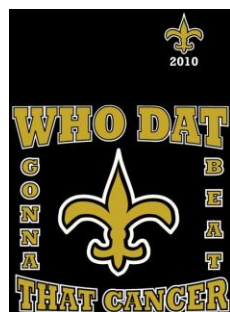
Relay for Life Shirt Features Who Dats

By Kimberly Peters-Craft

WHO DAT GONNA BEAT THAT CANCER?!

**SWANSON CENTER FOR YOUTH
DAT'S WHO**

In less than one month, over 300 Saints cancer fundraiser shirts have been sold; each worn as a badge of honor to someone walking with cancer or a sign of support to a loved one. Something you can always say about SCY is that they support a cause and have been doing so for five years now.



SCY has a "Relay for Life" team that brings recognition of and champions for the eradication of cancer. This year is especially bittersweet, as SCY said goodbye to two cherished and beloved employees who lost their fight with cancer. **Nurse Cynthia Williams** and **Officer Leamon Windsor** put a face on a disease and on a cause that has become an anticipated event on the Monroe campus every spring.

As Team Captain for this relay team I wish to say an overwhelming thank you, thank you, thank you to all who supported this team and, most importantly, this battle to stop cancer by purchasing a shirt (or 10!).

Celebrate. Fight back. Remember!

The Monroe News-Star ran a feature story about Kimberly and her T-Shirt design:



Two-time cancer survivor Kimberly Peters-Craft has been designing T-shirts for her American Cancer Society Relay for Life team for the past five years.

**Saints inspire cancer survivor
Who Dat T-shirts used to raise funds to
help patients**

BY ROBBIE EVANS • FEBRUARY 4, 2010

Two-time cancer survivor Kimberly Peters-Craft has been designing T-shirts for her American Cancer Society Relay for Life team for the past five years.

To decide on each year's design, Peters-Craft looks for inspiration in memorable events

taking place at the time. Funds raised from the T-shirts are used to help out patients in need. Less than two weeks ago, the LSU Mental Health Services employee got her inspiration when the New Orleans Saints won their conference championship and earned a spot in this year's Super Bowl.

"It came to me right before the Saints went to the championship," Peters-Craft said. "I had a totally different design I had made up, but this time it took less thinking than it did in the past." The black T-shirt's design says, "WHO DAT Gonna Beat That Cancer" wrapped around a large fleur-de-lis. The T-shirts will sell for \$15.

Peters-Craft will use the profits from sales of the shirts primarily to help patients who are undergoing cancer treatments pay some bills. She works with several health care providers in the area who have identified patients who may need financial assistance.

"I was attending a support group from St. Francis (Medical Center) and I met some people who had run into hard times," she said. "I know how it is to be in that position because you need or have to work or choose between paying an electric bill or making a trip to Houston for treatments. Sometimes people need a little help, and I thought maybe the best thing I could do is help in little ways."

Peters-Craft hopes this year's frenzy over the Saints will boost her personal efforts to raise cancer awareness. "I thought it was a good way to use what was going on to highlight cancer awareness," she said. "It's a way to celebrate the Saints and also put a face on cancer because almost everyone is affected in one way or another from it."

Peters-Craft is also having a few special-run T-shirts printed in memory of two co-workers who died last year from cancer — Leamon Windsor and Cynthia Williams. Peters-Craft works at Swanson Center for Youth in Monroe. Swanson's Facility Director Carolyn Atkins said she's proud of employees' efforts to raise cancer awareness.

"It is a common disease and something you have to fight," Atkins said. "Kimberly is the lead on this, and she's a perfect example to us as to what can happen. We have to do everything we can to help raise money for cancer research."

Atkins said the center's staff are not only excited about the Saints going to the Super Bowl, but also that they can show their support of an important cause. "The staff loved the T-shirt not only because of the case, but they liked to be able to wear a T-shirt that represented something," Atkins said. "They do so much that people are unaware of."

For more information on how to purchase a T-shirt, call Peters-Craft at 396-5210 and leave a message.

Thibodaux Regional Office

Congratulations

Ja'Nise Williams was chosen February **Employee of the Month**.

The Krewe of Ambrosia celebrated its 25th anniversary this carnival season in Thibodaux. **Taylor Percle, daughter of James and Tiffany Percle**, was chosen as a Junior Maid.



Fleur-de-lis king cake from Best Bakery, Houma.

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ is published monthly to communicate with and about OJJ staff in offices and facilities throughout the state, about agency activities, happenings and items of interest.

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ is produced by the Central Office with input from staff statewide.

...until next month

OJJ Administrative Team

Mary L. Livers, Ph.D, MSW, *Deputy Secretary*
Girard J. Melancon, *Assistant Secretary*
Alan M. Boxberger, *Undersecretary*
Paula Merrick-Roddy, *Deputy Undersecretary*
Carolyn B. Lewis, *Dep. Asst. Secretary, Community Based Services*
Philippe Magloire, *Deputy Assistant Secretary, Facilities*
Ellyn Peterson, *Chief of Operations*
Michelle R. Smith, *Deputy Assistant Secretary, Special Projects*
Jerel M. Giarrusso, APR, *Communications Director*
Marlyn Goins-McCants, *Family & Community Liaison*
Gwendolyn Jones, *Human Resources Director*
Martha Morgan, *General Counsel*
Kim B. Mims, *Director of Education*
Kelly D. Smith, MN, APRN, PHCNS-BS, *Health Services Administrator*

Contacts

For more information contact Jerel.Giarrusso@la.gov
225.287.7898

Family and Community Liaison
Email OJJ.FamilyLiaison@LA.GOV
Tel. 225.287.7985
Tollfree 1.800.594.3941

Reporters

Alexandria: Sharon Graham
Baton Rouge: Michelle Thomas
Bridge City: Cassandra Washington
Central Office: Katherine Abrams
Hammond: Courtney Pegues
Jetson: Daron Brown
Lafayette/Opelousas: Kevin Broussard
Lake Charles: Melissa Cross
Monroe: Gail Wilson
Natchitoches: Rosa Brownlee
New Orleans: Paulette Carter
Shreveport: Kristen McKee & Kristi Martin
Swanson: Kristi Walker
Tallulah: LaJuana Harrell
Thibodaux: Allison Lirrette

SPEAK (Special Projects, Expertise and Knowledge)

Michelle Smith, *Dep. Asst. Secretary, Special Projects*
Jerel Giarrusso, *Communications Director*
Fran Martin, *Director of Staff Development*
Gwen Brinkley, *Administrative Coordinator*